

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HELSIN 00548 171159Z

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ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-02 PRS-01 /042 W

----- 046023

R 171104Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9744

INFO USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS HELSINKI 548

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL

SUBJECT: BICENTENNIAL PROGRAM IN KUOPIO, CAPITAL OF SAVO

AS PART OF EMBASSY/USIS BICENTENNIAL PROGRAM, AMBASSADOR AUSTAD
AND 4 EMBASSY OFFICERS VISITED KUOPIO, CAPITAL OF SAVO PROVINCE
MARCH 10-12.

THE PROGRAM INCLUDED MEETINGS AND DISCUSSIONS WITH COMMUNIST
PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR, CHIEF MAYOR, CHAIRMAN OF CITY COUNCIL,
RECTOR OF KUOPIO UNIVERSITY, LABOR AND BUSINESS LEADERS, ENG-
LISH TEACHERS, YFU AND AFS RETURNEES AND SPECIAL AUDIENCE WITH
GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHBISHOP PAUL.

OTHER EVENTS WERE LECTURES IN SIX OF KUOPIO'S GYMNASIA ON
BICENTENNIAL, EARLY U.S. HISTORY AND FINNS IN AMERICA BY CAO,
PO AND ECO. OFF. PROVINCIAL LIBRARY SPONSORED EXHIBIT ON FINNS
IN AMERICA PUT TOGETHER BY U.S. HISTORIAN BILL COPELAND.
ONE OF THE HIGHPOINTS OF VISIT WAS MEETING WITH LABOR LEADERS
ATTENDED BY 40 TOP LABOR REPRESENTATIVES IN SAVO. 32 WERE
COMMUNIST AND 8 SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. LABOR LEADERS ASKED AMB-
ASSADOR AND LAB. ATT. NUMEROUS QUESTIONS ABOUT U.S. LABOR AND
SOCIAL POLICY. LABOR LEADERS WERE VISIBLY IMPRESSED WITH
ANSWERS AND AMBASSADOR'S CANDOR. GENERAL FEELING WAS LABOR LEAD-
ERS LEFT SESSION WITH MUCH BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF U.S.

HIGHLIGHT OF VISIT WAS BICENTENNIAL CEREMONY ARRANGED IN CITY
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HALL BY LOCAL CHAPTER FINNISH-AMERICAN SOCIETY (LFAS) WITH

ASSISTANCE FROM CITY AND USIS. CEREMONY FEATURED REMARKS BY DEPUTY MAYOR, LFAS NATIONAL CHAIRMAN, LFAS CHAPTER CHAIRMAN AND MAIN ADDRESS BY AMBASSADOR. CITY ORCHESTRA, LOCAL CHOIR, FOLK DANCE GROUP AND USIS SPONSORED BARITONE BEN MARTIN PROVIDED ENTERTAINMENT. FULL HOUSE AUDIENCE INCLUDED GOVERNOR, RECTOR, CITY OFFICIALS AND MILITARY COMMANDERS OF SAVO DISTRICT. PRESS COVERAGE WAS EXCELLENT. AMBASSADOR'S VISIT RECEIVED FRONT PAGE COVERAGE IN LOCAL CENTER PARTY NEWSPAPER SAVON SANOMAT (CIRC. 75,000). THE COVERAGE FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON AMBASSADOR'S PROGRAM AND PRESS CONFERENCE. NOTEWORTHY FEATURE OF COVERAGE WAS SAVON SANOMAT EDITORIAL IN ENGLISH AND FINNISH WELCOMING AMBASSADOR TO CITY. COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER PRINTED BRIEF ITEM ON VISIT. YLEISRADIO REPORTER INTERVIEWED AMBASSADOR AND INTERVIEW WAS BROADCAST REGIONALLY SECOND DAY OF VISIT.

AUSTAD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS, BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976HELSIN00548
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760101-0274
From: HELSINKI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760353/aaaabuae.tel
Line Count: 76
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION CU
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: wolfsd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUL 2004 by vandyklc>; APPROVED <24 AUG 2004 by wolfsd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BICENTENNIAL PROGRAM IN KUOPIO, CAPITAL OF SAVO AS PART OF EMBASSY/USIS BICENTENNIAL PROGRAM, AMBASSADOR AUSTAD
TAGS: SCUL, FI
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006